

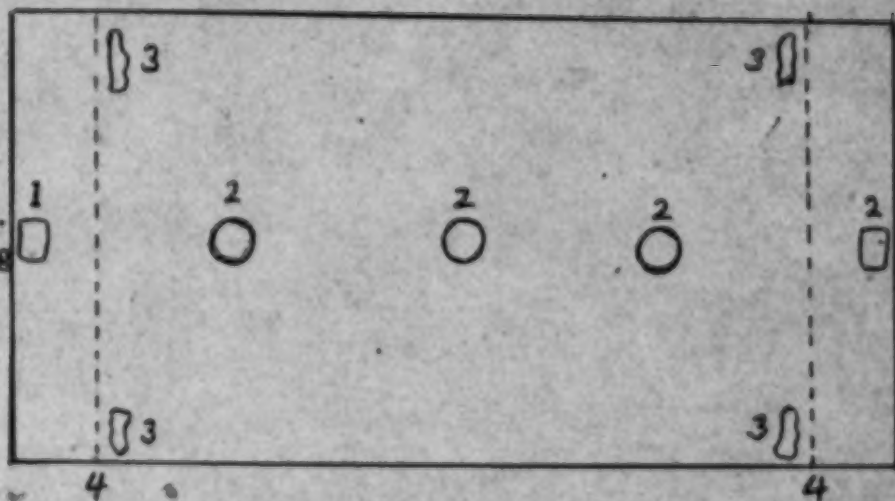
1: Burrows--47-B
116, 345, 575

(1947-48)

Woleaian

"Fig. 6. -Plan of men's house (fan nap)."

- 1, front post (ongarlk);
2, middle posts (sur oungo),
supporting ridge pole.
3, stone corner posts (sur perou).
4, vertical gable thatch, extending
from height of eaves to peak. "



1: Burrows--48
116, 335, 345, 532

(1947-48)

Woleaian
Ifalik

"The construction of the men's house (fan nap) is shown in Figure 6. It has several distinctive features. The ridge-pole is supported, not by a king post resting on a tie-beam, but by a row of middle posts. The two posts under the ends of the ridge-pole are squared, and the one under the front end is decorated with paintings and a phallic carving (Pl. 4, a). The corner posts are slabs of beach sandstone. The gable ends are filled by vertical walls extending from the peak to the height of the eaves. These walls are covered with coconut leaf, applied in a different way from the thatch of a roof. The lower ends of the leaves are bound in with wooden battens, producing a flat, smooth surface, instead of the shaggy one of a thatched roof, in which the lower ends of the leaves hang free."

1: Burrows--48-49
116, 345, 175, 333

(1947-48)

Woleaians 1-2
Ifalik

"Dann, in his account based on Sarfert's notes, attributes the introduction of men's houses on Ifalik to Fagil, a man from Yap. Fagil is said to have been shipwrecked on Ifalik during the regime of Dibodan or Dibodāu (recorded by me as Tipateu). On the list of chiefs he is only four earlier than Daoreligar, who was in power when Sarfert visited Ifalik in 1909. This would make men's houses a fairly recent innovation.

No story of Fagil was told to us in 1947-48. But recent introduction of men's houses is contradicted by several points in the legends we collected. The house Ilamai or Iramai, which Damm gives as the dwelling built by Modj (recorded by me as Maur), was described to us as the men's house on Falālap in Maur's time. Though there is no longer a men's house on that island, the site of Iramai is still pointed out. Maur is also said to have made use of the men's house Katelū on Falārik. The site of the ancient Katelū was just inland from the present men's house, also called by that name. A general point that seems to corroborate the ascription of antiquity to men's houses is the fact that they are characteristic of the culture of the western Carolines as a whole. Their absence on Ifalik would be anomalous.

If only the type of construction peculiar to men's houses, with middle posts and stone corner posts, were attributed to Fagil, the discrepancy would disappear. [49]

Damm's story adds that the men's houses built by Fagil were on stone piers projecting into the lagoon. Such stone piers still exist on Ifalik. The men's house is not built on

1: Burrows--48-49

116, 345, 175, 333

(1947-48)

Woleaians-2

Ifalik

one of them, nor was it in Sarfert's day. He was told that a house on one of the piers had been destroyed in the typhoon of 1907. Rather flimsy houses stood on piers on Falārik and Falālap when we arrived. One was destroyed and the other partly so in the hardest blow during our stay. The two piers in Rauau district had no houses in 1947-48, but were said to have had them at some previous time."

1: Burrows--133-134
116, 345, 565

(1947-48)

Woleaians
Ifalik

"Far the most conspicuous and important symbol of rank on the atoll is the tract of land called Katēlū, in Rauau district. There are two buildings on it, and a coral platform, now overgrown, where another building stood in ancient times. The two now standing are a canoe-house (generic name Fan ni Wā) and what speakers of English call the men's house, because unmarried men formerly slept there. The native generic name for it is Fan Nap or big house. Both canoe-house and men's house are sometimes called Katēlū, the same as the whole site.

The canoe-house seems to be only slightly more respected than other canoe-houses. In its use for storage of canoes it does not differ from them at all. As a men's clubhouse, it is used more by the chiefs than by anyone else, but is not forbidden to commoners. It was the regular meeting-place of chiefs during our [134] stay. Whether they would have used the men's house if our tent had not been pitched close beside it, I could not be sure."

1: Burrows--134
116, 345, 565, 532

(1947-48)

Woleaians
Ifalik

"The symbolism of rank which invests this building [KS: the men's house] as a whole is reinforced by several of its details. One is that the four corner-posts, unlike those of any other building on the atoll, are not of wood but of the compact beach sandstone called perou. The significance of this is indicated by the fact that one of the men's religious dances is called sur perou (stone corner-post), as if to say 'This is the firm, durable support on which the whole structure rests.' Another is the foremost or seaward one of the row of posts set in the ground which support the ridge-pole directly, another unique feature of this building (p. 48). This front post is called ŌngarIk. This word, too, is used as the name of one of the men's religious dances.

The ŌngarIk, unlike the rest of the row of posts, is hewn square and covered from top to bottom with decorations. A detailed discussion of these belongs with the study of native arts. Most of them seem to have no specific symbolism, only the general purpose of adorning and so dignifying the post. But the most conspicuous one refers to the legend of the massacre of the ancient population of Woleai and the repopulation of the atoll from Ifalik, most important of several such legends which, as will be pointed out (p. 162-3), express the sentiment of rank by exalting Ifalik above the other atolls round about. This symbol is a large phallus, rather realistically carved but painted white. The penis, about 18 inches long, points toward Woleai. It is said to represent the penis of Maur, which pointed toward Woleai in the legend (p. 154). "

1: Burrows--134

116, 345, 565

(1947-48)

Woleaians

Ifalik

"The men's house is far more significant than the canoe-house as an emblem of rank. It is rarely occupied nowadays except when the chiefs summon all the people to gather in and around it for a public meeting. Occasionally a few men-usually chiefs, or at least with a chief among them--gather there to consult together. At least once during our stay a few people, including both men and women, met there to talk with the chief Maroligar. I think, but am not certain, that he performed for them a kind of divination reserved to him, the apparatus of which is stored in this building (p. 189-190). Once a group of women, in response to the chiefs' request or order that a pandanus mat be plaited for Spiro, met in the men's house for part of the work. "

1: Burrows--183
116, 685, 345, 784

(1947-48)

Woleaians
Ifalik

"Another kind of taboo that is not altogether typical is the prohibition against trespassing on the site of the ancient men's house. As shown in the discussion of symbols of rank, the bad weather thought to follow violations of this rule is, unlike the usual sanction of taboos, attributed to specific supernatural persons--the ghosts of the great men of old who frequented the men's house that used to stand on this site, and still resent any disrespect shown to the place. The taboos against trespassing on the two homesteads associated with the lineages of highest rank are also ways of showing respect to the dead of high rank. I failed to find out whether trespassing on these sites is thought to be punished by ancestral spirits of these chiefly lineages."

The men's houses are the only ones, which have colored ornaments (kawolukl), arranged in a rather artistic decoration. Formerly the central supports and the roof supports (wāu) were very ornate. In the men's house Sarfert found an old beam under the roof; two sides of it were decorated with the rašūm pattern [AN: see drawing 176 of source]. . . while the third had a double rhomboid design, wōwo, which was supposed to represent a fish of the same name (drawing 177 of source).

On the pillar of a small dwelling Sarfert saw the vertical karebāli wulugālāi pattern, which was supposed to reproduce the tail of the wulugālāi fish [AN: see drawing 178 of source].

There were practically no wood carvings; however, Krämer found a wooden fish in the chief's house; then the waliwōl for Ällülēi should also be mentioned among the artistic products.

No details could be learned about oracles by lot, nor was anything known about the 16 demons; nevertheless the setting of part of story 75 in Müller, Yap, II, page 616 is on Lamotrek. The entire mythology is discussed in connection with Fels and seems to be peculiar to the Western Carolines, since no mention of it is made east of Fels.

In Cantova, page 311, reference is made to the prophetic knots used on the Western Carolines.

4: Krämer

(1909) 1937

Woleaians

345

For data on use of canoe houses see category 504.

"Each district also contains at least one canoe-house, whose structure similar to that of the malum, in that it has no walls, but it is much larger, the average canoe-house being about four times the size of the average house, [sic] The canoe-house not only serves as a protection for the canoes, but it also acts as the men's club-house, a phenomenon, we shall discuss later. Formerly each district had a club-house as well as a canoe-house, but most of them were destroyed by a typhoon in the 1920's and have not been rebuilt. One remains, however, on Falalap, and in structure is that of a house, only larger.

In the district of Rauau stands the fanap, the 'town hall' (literally, the big house), which again is architecturally, a large house."

28: Spiro--33-34
116, 592, 345, 283

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"Rope is made in the canoe-houses, these most important social and economic structures. Objectively viewed, there is little, if any reason, why the canoe-house should be the locale of its manufacture. It would be just as convenient to manufacture it in the home, except that there seems to be an aversion for doing any work in the house. For that matter the house is actually used for sleeping and conversational purposes only, since the cooking is done in the maluŋ, and the people eat [34] outside, except in the case of rain. So that despite the desire for rope, a man will never make it in his house, though his evenings could very well be taken up by its manufacture. There is no taboo on the performance of economic activity in the house; it just is not so used."

"A factor of major importance in the use of the canoe-house for the manufacture of rope is its function as a social as well as economic center. Since the destruction of the men's club houses in the last typhoon the canoe-houses have taken over their function, so that the men now congregate in the canoe-houses as formerly they congregated in the club-houses. Now this fact is important for an understanding of Ifaluk culture. Though there is a word for work in the Ifaluk vocabulary (engan), it refers to discrete and specific forms of labor, and is not used as a generic term, as it is in our own culture, as when a man says he is 'going to work.' No one has his special work to perform each day, from which he rests at the end of the day or the end of the week. So, too, there is neither a term nor a concept corresponding to our word economics. Our conceptualization of life activities into economic, social, recreational, etc, does not hold for the Ifaluk. This means that the various kinds of work (engan) that are performed are recognised as responses to certain basic survival needs, but the concept of work as vocation or as moral career that this term has assumed in western society, at least in its Puritan and Calvinist tradition, is completely foreign to the natives, and indeed would be inexplicable to them. Theoretical considerations aside, this means that a man's day is his own, to do with what he desires, and among the activities he engages in, are certain activities of economic importance. A man goes to his club-house in the morning

28: Spiro--34

116, 345, 283, 461, 156

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians-2

Ifalik

because there he will be with the other men, where he can discuss the events of the day, engage someone in a conversation, and at the same time, make rope, if he so desires. But there is nothing compulsive about his rope-making, or for that matter, about any economic activity. There is no concept of an economic obligation, 'this ought to be done', except insofar as it relates to basic biological needs, and then 'ought' has no place at all, for it is obvious that if a man wishes to eat, he must fish etc."

CHAPTER II

MOSTLY ABOUT PEOPLE

THURSDAY, the first day after the NETTLE left, was overcast, with occasional drizzling rains. This was probably just as well because it cut down on the temptation to wander; so we could concentrate on the organization of camp at the Fan Nap.

The Fan Nap—the "Men's House"—was a large structure, some forty feet long and twenty wide, with a high thatched roof that sloped steeply to within a couple of feet of the ground on the sides. The ends were closed with matting down to within four feet of the ground, which meant that any adult must crouch on entering or leaving. The main cross-beams inside were higher, but still low enough to be a constant hazard. I never did learn to use the proper inside-of-house crouch, and kept battering my head all summer. Ted and Don were more alert—or at least better at dodging.

The front part of the Fan Nap, nearest the lagoon, was used for sleeping quarters. Ted and Don had their cots at the sides, under the stringers—beams that had been hewn out of huge breadfruit logs. The logs looked precariously balanced on the heavy coral blocks that served as the corner posts of the house. Collapse of the house would have caused the occupants of the cots to be instantly crushed. The great beams, so close above, were thus at first something of a mental hazard. But they had withstood the gales of many years and were clearly solidly placed—and they were very convenient for hanging mosquito nets.

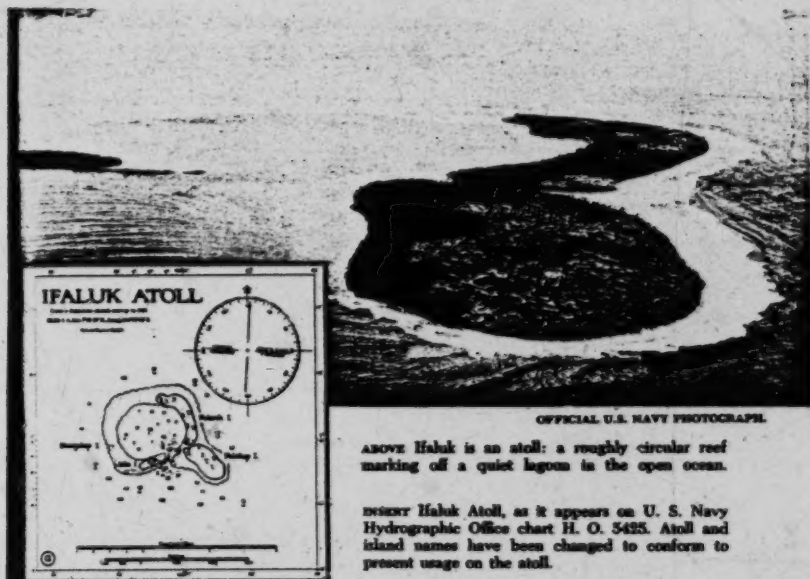
Tables and boxes were arranged in the central area to make working space. The equipment included carpenter's tools, and with these some

41: Bates & Abbott N-5 (1953) 1958

OR21 Woleai OR21

Ifaluk

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133
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ABOVE Ifaluk is an atoll: a roughly circular reef marking off a quiet lagoon in the open ocean.

INSERT Ifaluk Atoll, as it appears on U. S. Navy Hydrographic Office chart H. O. 5425. Atoll and island names have been changed to conform to present usage on the atoll.

BELOW The chiefs turned the Fan Nap, the Men's House, over to us for our residence.



345
137
114

[P. 32 (A)]

Mapping the Boondocks

41

and then pace directly toward him. Don would sight on Tony (or me 126 on arrival) to get the direction, and I would call back the paces so that Don could draw directly on the base map.

The main trail of Falarik, which I got in the habit of calling "the 487 broad highway," or sometimes "el camino real," ran through the coconut grove parallel to the lagoon shore, generally twenty or thirty yards 137 in from the water. It was about two yards wide, and neatly marked on each side by a row of moss-covered coral rocks. This broad highway ran between the Fan Nap and the lagoon, and passed directly in front of five of the big canoe houses that faced the lagoon along the Falarik shore. The sixth canoe house on Falarik was away from the trail on the point of land that jutted toward Falalap. There were also two canoe houses on Falalap, one facing the lagoon, and the other facing the pass between the two islands.

The canoe houses, clearly distinguishable on the aerial photographs, 126 were convenient reference points in mapping. They served not only 504 for the storage of canoes, nets, lines and other gear, but also as social centers for the men of the atoll. Groups gathered there to talk, or rest, 345 or weave nets, or carry on the never-ending job of making twine or 283 rope from sennit, coconut fiber. A big sea-going canoe was being built in the Falepenach canoe house, near the Fan Nap, during the summer of 1953. This provided me with a convenient and continuing subject for photography.

The broad highway ran for almost a mile along the lagoon shore of 491 Falarik, extending considerably beyond the last habitation, toward the 311 north end of the island, ending abruptly in the middle of nowhere. This northern tip of the island, beyond the end of the trail, was a wild tangle of vegetation, relatively little visited and little used. Except for 311 this northwest tip, the whole of the lagoon margin of the island was 133 a park-like coconut grove, kept clear of weeds or shrubs with almost 137 no other kind of tree—only an occasional breadfruit tree near the household areas, and a few other things like the big *Barringtonia* by the Sabolap canoe house.

The entire course of the broad highway was thus through the open 491 coconut grove. The habitations were mostly set at some distance back 361 from the highway, near the "boondock line."